

MR2349-792

Serial Number: 10/072,921

Reply to Office Action dated 4 October 2006

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At the outset, the courtesies extended by the Examiner in granting the 18 December 2006 interview are appreciatively noted. At the interview, the references cited by the Examiner in the 4 October 2006 Office Action were discussed in light of the further clarifying amendments proposed to Claim 1 by the undersigned Attorney, as set forth herein.

Responsive to the 4 October 2006 Office Action and the discussions had at the interview, Claim 1 is amended for further prosecution with the other pending Claims. It is believed that with such amendment of Claim 1, there is a further clarification of its recitations.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 1-6, 14, and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Chen, et al. reference in view of the Yang reference. In this regard, the Examiner acknowledged that Chen, et al. fails to disclose the different types of connectors for a universal serial bus voltage transformer, but relied upon Yang for disclosing the use of USB connectors. From this, the Examiner concluded that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have incorporated Yang's connector types for use in the Chen, et al. wall outlet device.

Turning to the Yang reference relied upon by the Examiner, that reference is a U.S. Patent which issued on 11 May 2004, and was filed for on 21 August 2002. This filing date is later than the subject Patent's 12 February 2002 filing

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date. Consequently, Yang does not constitute applicable prior art, and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In the interests of expediting prosecution of this case, Claim 1 is nonetheless amended to further clarify its recitations. As newly-amended, that Claim recites among its combination of features a transformer circuit which converts power from an AC source to a "DC charging voltage required for USB devices." The transformer circuit is operably coupled "directly to an outlet receptacle" defining the AC source, such that a plurality of USB connectors may be connected to its output "for exclusive passage" through those USB connectors of the "DC charging voltage provided by said transformer circuit." Equipped as it is with the various USB connector types, the claimed apparatus is one "whereby DC charging power" to various USB devices "is passed through said USB connectors exclusive of concurrent data passage therethrough," as Claim 1 also now more clearly recites.

The full combination of these and other features now more clearly recited by Applicant's pending Claims is nowhere disclosed by the cited Chen, et al. reference. While that reference does disclose a wall outlet with various direct current outputs, the focus of the reference is a power supply circuit of particular type and configuration. More specifically, Chen, et al. is directed to a switched mode type power supply (SMPS) having a high degree of circuit component integration – as opposed to a power supply circuit of linear type. The disclosed

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power supply provides various selectable DC voltage levels, but makes little more than incidental mention of the connector types therefor. The reference does specify different shaped sockets in one embodiment for preventing confusion between the selectable DC voltage levels; however, it nowhere even suggests providing "a plurality of USB connectors," much less providing them "for exclusive passage of said DC charging voltage ... therethrough," as Claim 1 recites. Nor does the reference provide any "DC charging voltage required for USB devices" as the Claim also recites.

It is respectfully submitted that the Chen, et al. reference, even when considered in combination with any other cited reference of record, fails to disclose the unique combination of elements now more clearly recited by the pending Claims for the purposes and objectives disclosed in the subject Patent Application.

It is now believed that the subject Patent Application has been placed fully in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

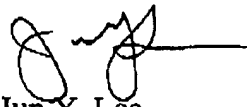
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No fees are believed to be due with this Amendment. If there are any charges associated with this filing, the Honorable Commissioner for Patents is hereby authorized to charge Deposit Account #18-2011 for such charges.

Respectfully submitted,
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Date



Jun Y. Lee